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ABSTRACT

This master's thesis surveyed the attitudes of Catholic parents towards the option of parochial or public school education for their children. The subjects, members of St. Kieran's parish in Chicago Heights, Illinois, were 85 families who had only preschool age children. Parents responded individually to questionnaires. A summary of questionnaire responses revealed: (1) young Catholic parents do not feel a moral obligation binding under sin to send their children to parochial school; (2) the majority of Catholic children coming of school age in the next six years are not likely to be enrolled in parochial schools; (3) young Catholic parents are in favor of the Catholic Church's maintenance of parochial schools; and (4) they believe federal and state governments ought to give financial aid to private schools. The appendixes include copies of the cover letter sent to parents and the questionnaire. (AJ)

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ATTITUDINAL STUDY OF ROMAN CATHOLIC PARENTS OF PRE-SCHOOL CHILDREN REGARDING THE OPTION OF "CATHOLIC" OR PUBLIC SCHOOL EDUCATION FOR THEIR CHILDREN

by

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Chapter I - Introduction

"Catholic parents have a very serious obligation to send their children to Catholic schools. This obligation binds under pain of serious sin. The public schools in the United States are not conducive to the religious training of Catholic children and parents may not send their children to them."[1]

With words similar to the above Catholics were warned from church pulpits and in religious books and periodicals about the "danger to the faith" present in the public schools. Thus the parochial school system of the Catholic Church in the United States grew and prospered. By far the greater percentage of all grade school children enrolled in private schools in the country were in Catholic schools. In some cities a majority of the school children were in Catholic parochial schools.

The dedication of religious women who volunteered their services helped the schools to exist and operate with only a minimum of tuition charge.

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[1] cf. Canons 1113, 1372, 1373, 1374, 1375; decrees of the Council of Baltimore 1884; Pastoral letter of the American Hierarchy of 1919, et alia. National Catholic Almanac, 1958, p. 478.

The demand for Catholic education was so great that lines formed through the night to await the time of registration infear that there would be no room.[2] New parishes and old had waiting lists and parents clamored for space for their children in the "sisters' school."

The number of sisters available was short of the demand and reluctantly lay teachers were introduced into the schools. This was to be a temporary measure, however, and as soon as nuns were available the lay teachers would be replaced. Gradually the one or two lay teachers among twenty nuns rose to four or five lay teachers and sixteen nuns and then to a 1 to 3 ratio.[3]

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[2]This was actually the case when St. Irenaeus School in the Chicago suburb of Park Forest opened its doors in September 1950. The all night vigil of numerous parents was covered by television and newspapers. The school closed those same doors in June 1969 after attendance and financial support had declined to the point where continued operation of the school was not feasible.

[3]Figures were available from the Catholic School Board, Archdiocese of Chicago for a comparison of religious to lay teachers in the elementary schools of the Archdiocese for the past seven school years.

Year	Religious	Lay Teachers
62-63	4,302	2,240
63-64	4,203	2,297
64-65	4,176	2,459
65-66	4,145	2,617
66-67	4,029	2,783
67-68	3,831	3,034
68-69	3,544	3,451

St. Irenaeus Parish School in south suburban Cook County during the school year of 1966-67 had a staff of ten nuns and seven lay teachers. In 68-69 there were only five nuns and eleven lay teachers.

Parents having sent their children to the Catholic school because they wanted the influence of the nun upon their child learned to their dismay that the child was as likely to have a lay woman as a nun. Great emphasis was placed upon the "dedicated" lay women in the school who accepted a very modest salary. After two or three years in the parochial school, however, many of the dedicated lay teachers moved to the public school where the salary was two to four times higher and the class size was as much as half the size of the parochial school.

In order to maintain a staff of competent lay teachers, salaries were raised and the financial pinch upon the parish forced the raising of tuition.[4] School standards were upgraded. School buildings and maintenance standards were enforced by law.[5] Expenses mounted, tuitions were raised and teacher salaries were raised.[6]

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[4]Tuition charges have always varied from parish to parish. Some Catholics remember paying one dollar each month for their Catholic education in the 1940's. Within recent years some parishes have asked $100 per child per year or $150 per family per year where two or more children were enrolled. Cost of supplies, books and uniforms where required were extra. Raffles and candy sales, popcorn days and Christmas card sales were frequent additional sources of income that parents were expected to support.

[5]Especially after the tragic Our Lady of the Angels Parochial school fire in 1959.

[6]The starting salary for a fully qualified lay teacher (B.A. practice teaching and State Education requirements completed) was $3500 in the school year 1964-65 in the Archdiocese of Chicago. The following year it increased to $5,000. In the 67-68 school year the figure was $5400 and in the 68-69 school year it reached $6,030. Figures are from the Catholic School Board. Archdiocese of Chicago.

The Bishops of the Catholic Church convened in Rome for the Second Vatican Council and Catholics throughout the world began a great self-examination of their role in society. Many nuns asked themselves if their christian mission required them to be in the classroom or perhaps rather on the streets among the poor. Many recalled that schools and hospitals were started because there were the great need of the poor - a need amply supplied by public institutions today. The uneducated immigrant needed the Catholic parochial ghetto school to maintain both his faith and his cultural heritage. Times had changed. Catholics had become educated. The Catholic had become a part of the mainstream of American life. The Al Smith of 1932 who lost the presidency because of his religion became the John Fitzgerald Kennedy, who won the Presidency in 1960.

Never again would Catholicism be a barrier to the highest office in the land. Catholics had truly arrived.

The self-examination of Vatican II prompted many to take a second look at Catholic Education. Was it necessary? Was it relevant? Was it too restrictive in a society increasingly more open and, perhaps more importantly, was it becoming a too expensive and questionable luxury? Schools cost were rising, opportunities for alternate service to fellow men such as the Peace Corp, Vista, Lay Mission movements were decreasing the number of religious vocations.[7]

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[7]One religious community who staff about 32 schools in the Chicago Archdiocese had 35 postulants in 1958; had only two in a most recent class, and zero in the class before that.

More and more lay teachers were introduced into the parochial schools. The great hopes of reform of Vatican II were very slow in becoming a reality. Religious of both sexes began to question their vocations and for the first time in American History an exodus from religious life compounded the acute decrease of vocations to it.

The Suburbs Arise

The great movement to the suburbs began after the Second World War. New public schools were built to meet the need. Taxes were high to cover the costs of the new schools. The burden of double taxation began to weigh heavily upon the Catholic suburbanite.

The new public schools seemed of excellent quality. Science Labs and extensive facilities for Physical Education were commonplace. But such facilities were expensive and rarely found in the new Catholic school in the suburb. Parents who always believed that their parochial schools in the city were far superior to the public schools began to have second thoughts when they became suburban residents.

In a relatively few years a growing giant of a school system began to show signs of a quick demise.

Setting of the Study

The Suburb

The parish chosen for study is St. Kieran's in Chicago Heights, Illinois. The founding pastor received his appointment on May 25, 1960,

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and his parish plot was described as a "no-man's land that was unincorporated, unimproved, and unimpressive."[8]

About two-thirds of the parishioners live within the boundaries of Chicago Heights and the remainder in the towns of Glenwood and Holbrook. Chicago Heights would sociologically be termed a "satellite city" rather than a suburb of Chicago. It is located thrity miles due south of Chicago's loop. The city recently celebrated its 75th anniversary. Holbrook is an unincorporated former farm community now completely surrounded by Chicago Heights, Homewood and Glenwood. It maintains its political independence, however. Glenwood too, was at one time a small farm town but recent construction has turned it into a booming suburb.

Prior to 1955 the parish territory was mostly covered by cornfields. Home construction began in 1956 and has continued since then. Most of the construction in the Chicago heights portion took place between 1956 to 1961. The Glenwood section began to be built about the same time with most of the construction being completed with the past five years.

A student's study of the parish taken in 1965 showed that 89 percent of the homes were at that time occupied by the original residents.[9]

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[8] cf. St. Kieran Parish Album Vol. I (1965) and Vol. II (1969).

[9] from a study of a Loyola University Sociology student for a term paper. Copy in parish files.

Ninety-nine percent of the families were home-owners with 95 percent still making payments and only 4 percent holding clear title. When asked if this was to be their permanent residence 49 percent indicated that they will probably be forced to move from their present homes because it will become too small for the family (23%), too large for the family (5%), and other reasons (27%). It was suspected that the other reasons would include a possible change in the husband's place of employment.

One would at first suspect that most of the parishioners had come from Chicago but the survey in 1965 showed 36 percent of the husbands and 41 percent of the wives were born outside the Chicago area.

When asked to indicate the reasons for their move to the suburbs, concern for the education and environment of the children ranked highest. In this they were in agreement with the results of studies by Dewey in Milwaukee County,[10] Fava in New York,[11]

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[10]Richard Dewey, "Peripheral Expansion in Milwaukee County," American Journal of Sociology 53 (May 1948), pp. 417-22.

[11]Sylvia Fleis Fava,"Urban-Suburban Contrasts in Social Participation: A study of Neighboring in New York City and Nassau County," unpublished Ph.D. dissertation, Northwestern University, 1956.

and Martin in the Eugene-Springfield Oregon area,[12] Dobriner,[13] in his book Class in Suburbia cites these studies and claims they show the preference for the suburbs over the city for the two reasons: suburbs are better for children and are less congested than cities.

The people of St. Kieran's parish indicated husband's employment as the second most common motive, desire for clean fresh air of the suburbs as third, greater sense of belonging to the community as fourth. Twelve percent indicated a desire to escape the movement of negroes as among their motives for moving into the area. At the present time there are about ten negro families living within the territorial boundaries of the parish. None of these are known to be Catholic and none of their children are in the parochial school.

The survey also showed that an economic motive in this area was a home they could afford - also ranked high.[14] The homes in the Chicago Heights section of the parish range in price from $17,000 to $25,000. In Glenwood the prices are slightly higher, from $20,000 to $35,000. Much of the area is in the Homewood-Flossmoor School district

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[12] Walter T. Martin, The Rural-Urban Fringe, (Eugene, Oregon: University of Oregon Press, 1953).

[13] William Dobriner, ed. The Suburban Community, (New York: CP. Putnam's Sons 1958), See particularly Wendell Bell, "Social Choice, Life Styles and Suburban Residence" p. 225.

[14] The source of this information was discussion with the residents. There is some difference in the quality of the homes, and correspondingly, in the price, in various sections of the area depending upon the builder.

and just as the reputation of their schools are high so too are the taxes to support them.

While there are no figures available the estimated annual income per family would range from $8,500 to $25,000.

The sections of Chicago Heights and Glenwood which make up the parish territory of St. Kieran Parish could easily be considered a residential suburb as, with the exception of two large shopping centers, these are no real centers of employment within the area.

The Parish and the School[15]

The St. Kieran Parish School was opened for the first time on September 8, 1962. A total of 196 students were enrolled. Three nuns and three lay women comprised the original faculty. Grades 1, 2, and 3 were taught. A very competent and "motherly" principal won the hearts of the parishioners and the school was enthusiastically received and supported by the people.

The school year 1965-66 saw the first eighth grade class and a vigorous athletic program began on the football field. School spirit was excellent. Total enrollment for the 1965-66 school year was 615 students.

As it is the purpose of this study to ascertain trends and attitudes which might have a more universal application it is important to note the good reputation of the school in the parish we are studying.

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[15]School records, parish bulletins, and the Parish Albums are the source of the information of this section.

The footnote gives the scores of the Standford Achievement Test for the school year 1968-69.[16]

One of the best ways to get a reasonably accurate statistical estimate is an up to date complete parish census which seeks out by visitation the Catholics of the parish territory. Tabulation of all the school age children revealed in such a census gives the best estimation.

Such census studies in two "average" parishes in the late 50's and early 60's, St. Bonaventure Parish on the north side of Chicago and St. Frances of Rome Parish in west suburban Cicero revealed the same ratio of one out of every three Catholic children in the parish were in public grade schools.[17] Such thorough parish census efforts are rare and tabulations from such studies are rarer still and records of such studies are virtually non-existant.

Auxilary Archbishop Bernard Sheil[18] was asked in 1961, how many public grade school children were in his large northside Chicago parish and he gave a figure that was approximately one half the number of students actually enrolled in the Religious Education

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[16] Standard Achievement test in the six areas tested. Eighth grade students, who would have been expected to average 8.6 scored 10.1, 10.5, 10.5, 9.3, 10.5, and 9.6. Seventh graders, tested in eight areas, expected score average 7.6 scored 8.8, 8.2, 8.8, 7.4, 9.1, 8.7, 8.8, and 8.2.
--- St. Kieran School Records

[17] From census records of St. Bonaventure Parish, Chicago, and St. Frances of Rome Parish, Cicero Illinois.

[18] Private conversation with Bishop Sheil.

Program for public grade school children was about half the size of his estimate of what it should be.

It is a very serious defect of a study such as this that in most parishes accurate records simply do not exist. Decisions are most frequently based upon the "feelings" of the administrators or in response to an order from the diocesan leadership rather than on the basis of research and study. We contend that approximately two-thirds of the Catholic children of the parish under study were enrolled in the parochial school but there are no records extant to prove such a claim. It is further our contention that this two-thirds was about standard for the average parish over the past two decades. Again there are no records to prove this.

If Catholic pastors of Chicago in the 1940's or 1950's were asked how many children of their parishioners were enrolled in public grade schools most would reply none or a very few. When we estimate that two-thirds of the children of a parish were traditionally enrolled in the parochial school we are using a figure that more than likely would be challenged as being too low rather than too high. A projection that in the future a minority of the children would be in the parochial school would therefore represent a significant departure from the tradition of Chicago Parochial Education of the past two decades.

Chapter II - The Subjects

St. Kieran Parish was deemed to be excellent for this study because of the newness of the school and the good reputation is enjoyed. The newness of the parish and the fact that virtually all its members had moved into the area from elsewhere reduced the possibility of narrow provincialism influencing the attitudes. As the parish was formed by the merging of a cross section of modern American families so the survey would reveal the attitudes of truly a cross-section of modern American Catholic families. Reactions would not be prejudiced by a particular aversion to this particular school. If anything the prejeduce would be in the other direction.

The Study was designed to estimate the future status of the parochial school relative to the proportion of the Catholic children of the parish it was likely to enroll. St. Kieran Parish records actually revealed that in the existing upper grades the traditional two out of three in parochial school proportion was being maintained but as one looked at the lower grades a gradual change in this proportion became noticeable. The question was evident - was this an isolated phenomenon or was it the beginning of a trend that would become more manifest in the years to come. The answer seemed to lie in the attitudes of young parents whose children were not yet in school. As they will decide, so will the status of the schools of the future exist.

St. Kieran Parish has a good parish census.[1] Because of the great mobility of the population and various other factors a parish census can never be perfect. Efforts to bring the parish census up to date were completed prior to this study. By going through the census records one by one families with only pre-school children were isolated. The ages of the children ranged from six weeks to six years. The first thought was to take a random sample of such families but as the total number came to only slightly more than one hundred it was decided to survey the total population.

Proceedure

Letters were addressed to these families, survey forms included and a return envelope enclosed. A few of the letters were returned by the post office as the family had moved and in the meantime a few new families registered in the parish. It turned out quite by accident that at one point exactly one hundred families had received the survey forms, and as all the newly registered had been included, the survey was closed.

In each letter a return un-stamped envelope was enclosed. These were numbered and cross referenced with the list of the families who had been mailed the survey. While the participants were assured of anonymity, we asked that they use the coded return envelope so we might prod those who were slow to respond. As the envelopes were returned, either by mail or by dropping in the collection basket at

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[1]Parish files. Some aspects of parish census are, of course, of a private nature and are therefore not available for public pursual.

Sunday Mass, the code numbers were checked off the list of names. About two weeks after sending the survey, post cards reminders were mailed to those who had not responded. After a period of time a second proding was done by telephone calls. Some said they had misplaced the survey and they were sent another. Others refused to cooperate and indicated they were not interested. Others simply could not be reached.

Approximately two months after the initial mailing the survey was deemed completed. At this point exactly 85 of the 100 families had responded. The study, then, is based upon an 85 percent response to the survey questionnaire. Copies of the cover letter and the survey forms are attached in an appendix to this paper.

The Questionnaire

The obviousness of the rationale between the choice of statements in the questionnaire renders a detailed explanation tedious.

It was necessary that the questionnaire be short and yet comprehensive. It must also be inoffensive. The respondents would readily respect the right of the author to ask background questions such as whether or not they attended public or catholic schools, their relationship to the parish, and similar matters. They would rightly resent, however, any inquiry as to their annual income, cost of their home and similar items which were "none of our business". These matters, while of traditional concern to sociological inquiry, have little value in this study.

The statements were set up on a five point scale asking agreement or disagreement. The sequence of the items and the specific wording of the statements were carefully worked out so as to neither threaten nor to indicate in any way a desired response. Wherever a "traditional" or "expected" response might be possibly indicated the wording was changed so as to imply, if anything, the opposite. A number of statements were included more to stimulate the thinking of the respondent than to gather usable information.

The questionnaire was carefully tested with a number of parents who would not be in the survey and a few ambigious phrases and words were changed.

Statements One and Two

> Catholic parochial schools are essential to the welfare of the Catholic religion in the United States.
>
> It would be in the best interests of the Catholic Church to begin immediately to phase out all its parochial schools.

The Catholic school system in the United States in somewnat unique and the marvel of the Catholic world. Its historic contribution to the strength of the Catholic religion in the United States is undeniable. How essential it is in the changed condition today and for a Catholic population that has matured and become a part of the mainstream of American life is questionable. One sometimes wonders whether the loyalty and devotion of Catholic parishioners is to their religion or to the availability of a protected school for their children. One wonders if our people feel we have matured sufficiently as a religious body to continue to grow and prosper without depending on the school. Response to this statement is of interest but not crucial

to this study.

Statements three and four.

> If a choice must be made it would be better to keep and maintain the Catholic high schools and eliminate the grade schools.
>
> If certain grades in the Catholic schools were to be eliminated it would be better to eliminate the lower grades (first, second, and third) and keep the sixth, seventh and eighth.

In the practical order of things, if, and when a cutback becomes necessary, it would possibly involve a gradual elimination of services. Opinions as to where the cutback should begin are as varied as the individuals questioned. Response to these statements would be of interest as showing the mind of the opoulation but would be valueless as a factor of decision without a complete consideration of the alternatives.

Statements Five and Six.

> Children who attend St. Kieran Parochial Grade School receive an inferior education.
>
> All things considered, a boy or girl would get a better education at Homewood-Flossmoor high school than at Marion high school.

Loyalty has long been a characteristic of the Catholic population of the United States and thus one would expect these statements would invoke enthusiastic and loyal support of their schools. Particularly one would expect a loyal reaction to Statement five, even though none of their children was yet enrolled in either school system. It is important to note that by objective standards

there is nothing to indicate that the school is inferior; indeed a strong argument for quite the opposite is easily constructed. Strong disagreement with the statement is to be expected. Only should the response be otherwise would there be a significance. The same would apply to a somewhat lesser degree to statement six.

Statement Seven.

> It would be a serious sin for parents to send their children to public schools.

Manuals of morality for American catholics, clergy instructions from pulpit and in private strongly enforced the requirement of catholics to send their children to Catholic school. It is to be supposed that the parents querried in the survey had long been trained and drilled in this obligation and a sazable number of respondents indicating a negative attitude would be significant.

Statements Eight and Nine.

> It would be in the best interests of the United States if all non-public schools were eliminated.

> The best and most fair solution is for either the federal or state government to give financial aid to parochial and private schools (either directly or indirect) for all subjects except Religion.

There are strong feelings about federal or state support of any kind for private schools. Many fear a loss of independence and freedom for the schools if aid is granted, others feel the so called principle of separation of Church and State is involved. The mood of the population changes quickly in this area and the response to these statements might be of interest.

Statements Ten and Eleven.

As I see things now, when the time comes, my children will probably be enrolled in

___Public Grade school ___Public high school

___Parochial grade school ___Catholic high school

___Undecided ___Undecided

If the federal or state governments were to grant substantial aid to non-public schools, so as to render tuition and other expenses almost negligible, my response to question number 10 would be

___Definitely different ___Probably different

___Undecided ____Probably the same ___.Definitely the same.

Herein is contained the subject matter of the study. As the parents see things now, where will their children attend school. If past history is to repeat itself, we would expect a two to one preference for the Catholic parochial school. If a new trend is developing some new evidence may become apparent.

Chapter Three - Response to the Survey

The Responses of the Total Population

Of the exactly one hundred survey forms mailed, eighty five were completed and returned. As a separate response was asked from husband and wife, a total of 170 respondents participated. In some cases individuals failed to respond or skipped certain statements resulting in less than 100 percent totals for some items.

Among the characteristics of the population sample are the following:

One hundred forty three (84%) were born Catholics, fourteen (8%) were converts, thirteen (7.6%) were not Catholic, five (3%) were lapsed Catholics, twenty-nine (17%) indicated they were graduates of Catholic colleges, thirty-two (19%) indicated they graduated from colleges other than Catholic, sixty-six (39%) were from Catholic high school, eighty-nine (52%) were from public high school, ninety-seven (57%) were graduates of a Catholic grade school, while fifty-seven (33.5%) were graduates of a public grade school. For ninety-two (54%) grade and high school was in Cook County, while seventy-three (43%) indicated elsewhere. Twenty-nine (17%) indicated they were "very or fairly active in the parish", thirty-five (20.6%) said "active on rare occasions", and one hundred four (61%) replied they were "not particularly active" in their parish.

The responses of the total population will be found on the first line in each of the tables in this chapter.

One wonders if there is any difference in the attitudes of those who received their early education in the Archdiocese of Chicago as opposed to those whose grade and high school experiences was elsewhere.

The respondents were divided accordingly and the results were compared to the total population. Table 1a and 1b also compare the responses of the ninety-two participants who received their grade and high school education in Cook County, Illinois with the responses of those who received their early education elsewhere than Cook County, Illinois

Table 1a - A comparison of the Total Population with those who received their early education in Cook County and those who were educated elsewhere.

Statement		% AGREE	% DIS-AGREE	% UN-DECIDED
1. Parochial schools essential to Catholic religion	Total Population	53	26	21
	a. Cook County	50	25	25
	b. elsewhere	56	26	18
2. Church ought to phase out parochial schools	Total Population	15	63	22
	a. Cook County	15	64	18
	b. elsewhere	11	63	25
3. Better to keep High Schools	Total Population	26	59	14
	a. Cook County	32	57	11
	b. elsewhere	20	62	15
4. Better to keep Higher Grades	Total Population	40	45	14
	a. Cook County	44	43	12
	b. elsewhere	36	48	15
5. Inferior Education at Parochial School	Total Population	10	38	50
	a. Cook County	9	39	51
	b. elsewhere	9	40	49
6. Better Education at Homewood-Flossmoor	Total Population	27	25	46
	a. Cook County	30	24	46
	b. elsewhere	23	26	45
7. Serious sin to send children to public school	Total Population	4	93	1
	a. Cook County	2	96	0
	b. elsewhere	5	92	1
8. Best for U.S. to eliminate all non-public schools	Total Population	0	92	8
	a. Cook County	0	92	8
	b. elsewhere	0	93	7
9. Most fair to give aid to non-public schools	Total Population	57	28	14
	a. Cook County	61	21	17
	b. elsewhere	53	34	11

Table 1b - Comparison of the Total Population (N = 170) with those who received their early education in Cook County and those who were educated elsewhere.

		% SCHOOL PUBLIC	% SCHOOL CATHOLIC	% UN-DECIDED
Probably Choice of grade school for their children	Total Pop.	43	38	19
	a. Cook County	42	38	20
	b. elsewhere	45	37	18
Probably choice of High School for their children	Total Population	37	27	34
	a. Cook County	36	28	35
	B. Elsewhere	40	27	33

		% DIFFERENT	% SAME	%UN-DECIDED
If State Aid is given to Schools - Response to above would be	Total Population	24	57	11
	a. Cook County	24	57	11
	b. elsewhere	24	55	12

a. - N 92

b. - N 73

c. Some percentages do not equal 100 % because in some cases respondents failed to answer specific questions.

d. The questionnaire gave a five choice response. These have been combined for simplification to three categories.

Observations

The attitudes of those who are alumni of Cook County schools agree substantially with the attitudes of alumni of non-Cook County schools.

The characteristics of the two groups are also similar with the interesting exception that those from outside Cook County tend to rate themselves as much more active parishioners than those from Cook County.

Non-Catholics, Converts, and Lapsed Catholics

Those who indicated in their response that they were converts to the Catholic faith, those who indicated they were not of the Catholic faith and those who indicated they had lapsed from the practice of the Catholic faith were then isolated for further study. Their separate responses were compared to the responses of the total population.

Of the 170 respondents, thirteen were not of the Catholic faith. Of these two had some Graduate studies and five indicated they graduated from colleges other than Catholic. All were high school graduates (or equivalent), one from Catholic high school, and twelve from public high school. All replied they were "Not particularly active" in their parish.

Fourteen of those who participated in the Survey were converts to the Catholic faith. Of these five were college graduates and thirteen were high school graduates (or equivalent). For nine, grade and high school was in Cook County, while five indicated elsewhere. Two indicated they were "very or fairly active" in the parish, three said, "Active on rare occasions" and nine replied they were "not particularly active" in their parish.

The five respondents who indicated they were lapsed Catholics had all been born Catholic, and all five are public high school graduates. All but one graduated from Catholic grade schools.

Tables 2A and 2B summarize the responses on the basis of religious status.

Table 2a - A comparison of the Total Population (N= 170) with converts, non-Catholics, and lapsed Catholics.

Statement		% AGREE	% DIS-AGREE	% UN-DECIDED
1. Parochial Schools essential to Catholic religion	Total Population	53	26	21
	a. Converts	57	36	7
	b. Non-Catholics	31	38	31
	c. Lapsed Cath.	80	20	0
2. Church ought to phase out parochial schools	Total Population	15	54	22
	a. Converts	14	64	21
	b. Non-Catholics	23	53	21
	c. Lapsed Cath.	60	40	0
3. Better to keep high schools.	Total Population	26	59	14
	a. Converts	28	64	7
	b. Non-Catholics	15	46	38
	c. Lapsed Cath.	0	60	60
4. Better to keep Higher Grades	Total Population	40	45	14
	a. Converts	35	56	7
	b. Non-Catholics	31	46	23
	c. Lapsed Catholics			
5. Inferior Education at Parochial School	Total Population	10	38	50
	a. Converts	0	42	57
	b. Non-Catholics	15	31	54
	c. Lapsed Cath.	0	20	80

Table 2-A - A comparison of the Total Population (N 170) with converts, non-Catholics, and lapsed Catholics.

Statement		% AGREE	% DIS-AGREE	% UN-DECIDED
1. Parochial Schools essential to Catholic religion	Total Population	53	26	21
	a. Converts	57	36	7
	b. Non-Catholics	31	38	31
	c. Lapsed Cath.	80	20	0
2. Church ought to phase out parochical schools.	Total Population	15	54	22
	a. Converts	14	64	21
	b. Non-Catholics	23	53	21
	c. Lapsed Cath.	60	40	0
3. Better to keep high schools.	Total Population	26	59	14
	a. Converts	28	64	7
	b. Non-Catholics	15	46	38
	c. Lapsed Cath.	0	60	60
4. Better to keep higher grades.	Total Population	40	45	14
	a. Converts	35	56	7
	b. Non-Catholics	31	46	23
	c. Lapsed Cath.			
5. Inferior Education at Parochial school	Total Population	10	38	50
	a. Converts	0	42	57
	b. Non-Catholics	15	31	54
	c. Lapsed Cath.	0	20	80
6. Better Education at Homewood-Flossmoor	Total Population	27	25	46
	a. Converts	7	42	50
	b. Non-Catholics	31	31	50
	c. Lapsed Cath.	0	20	80
7. Serious sin to send children to public school.	Total Population	4	93	1
	a. Converts	7	92	0
	b. Non-Catholics	0	100	0
	c. Lapsed Cath.	0	100	0

Table 2-A Continued

Statement		% AGREE	% DIS-AGREE	% UN-DECIDED
8. Best for U.S. to e eliminate all non-public schools.	Total Population	0	92	8
	a. Converts	0	100	0
	b. Non-Catholics	0	92	8
	c. Lapsed Cath.	0	100	0
9. Most fair to give aid to non-public schools	Total Population	57	28	14
	a. Converts	57	28	14
	B. Non-Catholics	30	55	15
	c. Lapsed Cath.	60	20	20

Table 2-B - Comparison to the Total Populatinn with converts, non-Catholics, and lapsed Catholics.

Statement		% Public School	% Catholic School	% Undecided
Probable choice of grade school for their children	Total Population	43	38	19
	a. Converts	36	42	21
	b. Non-Catholics	54	22	22
	c. Lapsed Cath.	20	40	40
Probable choice of high school for their children	Total Population	37	27	31
	a. Converts	28	42	28
	b. Non-Catholics	62	8	23
	c. Lapsed Cath.	40	40	20
		% Diff.	% Same	% Undec.
If state Aid is given to schools - response to above would be	Total Population	24	57	11
	a. Converts	28	50	21
	b. Non-Catholics	8	69	23
	c. Lapsed Cath.	0	60	40

a. - N 14

b. - N 13

c. - N 5

Observations

Converts

Of the fourteen converts, non responded that students at St. Kieran received an inferior education but more than half (8) were undecided. Only one thought it a sin to send his children to public school, none were undecided and a majority (9) strongly disagreed with the idea. All oppossed a monopoly of public schools. Converts differed from the majority in their preference for a parochial grade school and a Catholic high school for their children..

Non-Catholics

As a group the thirteen (13) non-Catholics were unanimous in rejecting the idea of sin in sending children to a non-Catholic school. They differed slightly from the majority in that by a five to four vote they did not feel Catholic parochial schools are essential to the welfare of the Catholic religion in the United States. Non-Catholics were very definitely in favor of public grade school for their children and even more so in favor of public high school.

LApsed Catholics

It is interesting to note that all five lapsed Catholics are public high school graduates. Lapsed Catholics seem to see a very close connection of necessity between the Church and its school, but by a three to two vote they feel it would be best for the Church to phase out its schools. They are very mixed in their choice of schools for their children.

Catholic College Graduates

A total of twenty-nine (29) of our respondents indicated they were graduates of Catholic colleges. One would suspect they would be enthusiastic supporters of the Catholic school system. In order to determine any male-female differences the responses are divided by sex. Sixteen (16) of the respondents are male, thirteen (13) are female.

Of the sixteen male Catholic college graduates all were "born Catholics" and twelve (12) were graduates of Catholic high school and two (2) of public high school. Eleven were graduates of a Catholic grade school while two were graduates of a public grade school. For ten respondents, grade and high school was in Cook County, while six indicated elsewhere. Three indicated they were "very or fairly active" in the parish, two said "active on rare occasions", while eleven replied they were "not particularly active" in their parish.

Of the thirteen female Catholic college graduates, all thirteen were 'born Catholics". All were high school graduates (or equivalent) eleven from Catholic high school, two from public high school. All were graduates of a Catholic grade school. For six of them, grade and high school was in Cook County, while seven indicated elsewhere. Three indicated they were "very or fairly active" in the parish. Four said "active on rare occasions", and six replied they were "not particularly active in their parish.

The responses of these subgroups are presented and compared with the total sample in Tables 3-A and 3-B.

Table 3-A - A comparison of the Total Population (N 170) with Catholic college graduates - Male - Female.

Statement		% AGREE	& DIS-AGREE	% UN-DECIDED
1. Parochial Schools essential to Catholic religion	Total Population	53	26	21
	a. Cath. college	55	27	17
	b. Male	62	25	12
	c. Female	46	30	23
2. Church ought to phase out parochial schools.	Total Population	15	54	22
	a. Cath. college	21	58	21
	b. Male	25	56	19
	c. Female	15	62	23
3. Better to keep high schools.	Total Population	26	59	14
	a. Cath. college	41	48	10
	b. Male	31	56	12
	c. Female	54	38	8
4. Better to keep higher grades.	Total Population	40	45	14
	a. Cath. college	62	34	3
	b. Male	62	37	0
	c. Female	61	31	8
5. Inferior Education at parochial school.	Total Population	10	38	50
	a. Cath. college	10	31	51
	b. Male	19	31	56
	c. Female	0	38	54
6. Better Education at Homewood-Flossmoor.	Total Population	27	25	46
	a. Cath. college	45	17	34
	b. Male	50	18	25
	c. Female	38	15	46
7. Serious sin to send children to public school.	Total population	4	93	1
	a. Cath. college	3	97	0
	b. Male	6	94	0
	c. Female	0	100	0

Table 3-A Continued

Statement		% Agree	% Dis-Agree	% In-decided
8. Best for U.S. to eliminate all non-public schools.	Total Population	15	64	22
	a. Cath. College	0	86	14
	b. Male	0	87	12
	c. Female	0	76	15
9. Most fair to give aid to non-public schools.	Total Population	57	28	14
	a. Cath. college	65	31	3
	b. Male	62	37	00
	c. Female	69	23	8

Table 3-B - Comparison of the Total Population (N 170) with Catholic college graduates - Male and female.

		% Public School	% Catholic School	% un-decided
Probable choice of grade school for their children	Total Population	43	38	19
	a. Catholic college	45	38	17
	b. Male	44	50	6
	c. Female	46	23	31
Probable choice of high school for their children.	Total Population	37	27	31
	a. Catholic college	24	41	35
	b. Male	31	50	19
	c. Female	15	31	54
		% Diff.	% Same	% Undec.
If state aid is given to schools - response to above would be	Total Population	24	57	11
	a. Cath. college	28	65	7
	b. Male	25	68	6
	c. Female	31	61	8

A - N 29

b - N 16

c - N 13

d - Some percentages do not equal 100% because in some cases respondents failed to answer specific questions.

e - The questionnaire gave a five choice response. These have been combined for simplification to three categories.

Observations

The Catholic college graduates differed from the total population in that if a choice must be made between keeping the lower or upper grades in the parochial school, he/she would choose keeping the upper grades. He/she tends to agree that a boy or girl would get a better education at the local public high school than at the local Catholic high school.

The male Catholic college graduate chooses a parochial grade school and a Catholic high school for his children while his female counterpart chooses a public grade school but a Catholic high school although many more of the women are undecided in this matter than are the men.

If a choice were necessary both male and female college graduates showed a preference in keeping the higher grades. The men by a vote of nine to five (with two undecided) favored keeping the grade schools if a choice were necessary between grade and high schools, while the women indicated seven to five (with one undecided) in favor of keeping and maintaining the high schools.

Six of the sixteen husbands, while still a minority, expressed a strong preference for keeping the lower grades. Three of the men and one woman did not respond to the statement asking if the parochial school provided an inferior education.

Two out of three of the male Catholic college graduates indicated they were not particularly active in their parish, but more than half of the female Catholic college graduates said they were active. All of the thirteen female, Catholic college graduates were graduates from a parochial grade school.

Had the women expressed themselves differently one might say that because of their small children they were thinking of the immediacy of grade school. By being in favor of the high school they perhaps indicated a feeling of being able to cope with the grade school child's religious education but feared their ability to do so when their children were teens. This seemed interesting so the characteristics of the female Catholic college graduates were separated according to their response to Statement 3.

The only interesting distinction discovered was that all six who favored the high school rather than the grade school received their grade and high school education elsewhere than Cook County, whereas six of the seven who favored retention of grade school rather than high school received their grade and high school education in Cook County.

This perhaps indicates that the strong tradition of the parochial school in every parish in the Archdiocese of Chicago greatly influences the women but does not have the same influence upon the men.

The male Catholic college graduates were then divided according to their decision about grade school education of their children. Seven indicated their children would attend public grade school, but two of the seven indicated a choice of Catholic high school for their children. Of the seven who indicated their children would probably attend public grade school two indicated their response would be probably different if the federal or state government would give such financial aid to parochial and private schools (either direct or indirect) as to render tuition and other expenses almost negligible.

Eight male Catholic college graduates indicated their children would attend parochial grade school but five of these indicated the choice of Catholic high school for their children while two were undecided.

The female Catholic college graduates were divided according to their decisions about grade school education of their children. Of a total of thirteen, four were undecided about both grade school and high school. One of the four undecided indicated her response would be definitely different if the federal or state government were to grant substantial aid to non-public schools, so as to render tuition and other expenses almost negligible. Three indicated a choice of parochial grade school for their children but two of the three were undecided as to high school; the other one indicated Catholic high school. Six of the female Catholic college graduates indicated a choice of public grade school for their children; but three of the six indicated a Catholic high school, one was undecided, two indicated public ~~high~~ school.

Husbands vs. Wives

Next the Catholic college graduates were paired off to determine how many husband-wife combinations were in the sub group. The twenty-nine represented 25 different family units, only four couples being represented in the sample. There were disagreements in the responses of these couples but nothing of special interest.

Catholic High School Graduates and Public High School Graduates

One would expect the graduates of Catholic high schools to favor Catholic education. Here we have isolated the fourty-two respondents who graduated from Catholic high school but did not graduate from Catholic colleges. These were matched with the fifty-seven (57) respondents who were graduates of public high schools.

Among the characteristics of the Catholic high school graduates but non-Catholic college graduates were the following:

All were born Catholics. Two had some Graduate studies. Thirteen indicated they graduated from colleges other than Catholic. All but one were graduates of a Catholic grade school. For fourteen, grade and high school was in Cook County, while eighteen indicated elsewhere. Nine indicated they were "very or fairly active" in the parish, thirteen said "active on rare occasions" and twenty replied they were "not particularly active" in their parish.

The fifty-seven (57) public high school graduates had the following characteristics:

All were born Catholics. Eighteen indicated they graduated from colleges other than Catholic. Twenty-six (26) were graduates of a Catholic grade school, while thirty-one (31) were graduates of a public grade school. For twenty-five (25) grade and high school was in Cook County, while thirty-two (32) indicated elsewhere. Nine indicated they were "very or fairly active" in the parish, ten said "active on rare occasions" and thirty-eight (38) replied they were "not particularly active" in their parish. Data for these respondents is compared with data for the entire sample in Tables 4-A and 4-B.

Table 4-A - A comparison of the Total Population (N-170) with Catholic and public high school graduates.

Statement		% Agree	% Dis-agree	% Un-decided
1. Parochial schools essential to Catholic religion.	Total Population	53	26	21
	a. Cath. High Grads	60	14	26
	b. pub. high Grads	47	32	21
2. Church ought to phase out parochial schools.	Total Population	15	63	22
	a. Cath. Hi grads	7	67	20
	b. publicHi grads	9	67	24
3. Better to keep High schools.	Total Population	26	59	14
	a. Cath. High grads	31	57	12
	b. Public High grads	25	65	9
4. Better to keep higher grades.	Total Population	40	45	14
	a. Cath. High grads.	38	38	24
	b. Public High grdds	40	48	12
5. Inferior education at parochial school.	Total Population	10	38	50
	a. Cath. High grads	7	38	52
	b. Public High grads	11	37	49
6. Better education at Homewood-Flossmoor.	Total Population	27	25	46
	a. Cath. High grads	26	26	45
	b. Public High grads	25	25	47
7. Serious sin to send children to public school.	Total Population	4	93	1
	a. Cath. High grads	5	95	0
	b. Public high grads	2	95	2
8. Best for U.S. to eliminate all non-public schools	Total Population	0	92	8
	a. Cath. High Grads	0	93	7
	b. Public Hi Grads	0	93	7
9. Most fair to give aid to non-public schools.	Total Populationq	57	28	14
	a. Cath. High Grads	62	24	12
	b. Public high grads	51	29	20

Table 4-B - Comparison of the Total Population (N-170) with Catholic and Public high school graduates.

		% Public School	% Catholic School	% Undecided
Probable choice of grade school for their children	Total Population	43	38	19
	a. Cath. High Grads	41	38	21
	b. Public High grads	49	33	18
Probable choice of High school for their children.	Total Population	37	27	31
	a. Cath. High Grads	31	28	35
	b. Public High grads	44	21	27
		% diff.	% same	% undecided
If state aid is given to schools - response to above would be	Total Population	24	57	11
	a. Cath. High Grads	31	62	7
	b. Public High Grads	18	69	11

a. - N 42

b. - N 57

c. Some percentages do not equal 100 % because in some cases respondents failed to answer specific questions.

d. The questionnaire gave a five choice response. These have been combined for simplification to three categories.

Observations

The Catholic high school graduate who did not graduate from a Catholic college agrees with the majority of the 170 respondents except that:

1) he is evenly divided on the choice of keeping the upper or lower grades in the parochial school; 2) he is also almost evenly divided on the question of sending his children to parochial grade school and Catholic high school and; 3) he is probably greatly influenced in this matter by financial considerations.

Those who were not undecided, chose (by a vote of 17 to 16) public grade school for their children. All but one of these were themselves graduates of parochial grade school. However, thirteen indicated that their response would probably or definitely be different if the federal or state governments were to grant substantial aid to non-public schools, so as to render tuition and other expenses almost negligible.

It seemed desirable to isolate the seventeen who would send their children to public grade school, in order to examine their responses more closely. This group of seventeen graduates of Catholic high schools are very significant because they are those who have in a sense rejected the values of their parents as regards the choice of a parochial school education for their children. Only one indicated that his/her decision would definitely be different if federal or state

governments etc., and five said their decision would probably be different -- a total of six who might be influenced by financial reasons. This is opposed to nine who indicated their decisions would not change. Two were undecided. Can we conclude then, that only two-fifths of Catholic high school graduates reject parochial education for their children because of financial consideration? An interesting observation seems warranted and as it does not pertain to the over-all study, it might be appropriate to state it here: It would appear that over half of Catholic high school graduates, presently parents of pre-school children, will in the next six years decide <u>not</u> to send their children to parochial schools and only 40 percent of these will do so because of financial considerations.

Tabulation of the responses of the Catholic high school graduates revealed an interesting apparent contradiction. While they rejected (by a vote of seven to four with six undecided) the parochial school for their own children, most feel the parochial school is essential to the welfare of the Catholic religion in the United States and only two of these seventeen feel the parochial schools ought to be phased out.

An indication that there possibly exists a lack of complete confidence in the parochial school is that a majority, ten of the seventeen, respond "undecided" to the statement that children who attend the parochial school

receive an inferior education. As indicated earlier, the parish school chosen for this study is by no means inferior and among those knowledgable has an excellent reputation. This does seem to indicate a lack of communications or general apathy. This situation, however, underscores the importance of the kind of study undertaken here.

Active or Inactive Parishioners

The Catholic high school graduates as a group were divided to see what differences of opinion might be found according as one stated he was very or fairly active in the parish, active on rare occasions, or not particularly active in the parish. Nine graduates of Catholic high school indicated they were very or fairly active in the parish; these included five women and four men. It was interesting to note that an equal number of people who considered themselves active or fairly active parishioners intended to send their children to public grade school as to parochial grade school. It is note worthly that none of these thought an inferior education was given in parochial schools although three of the seventeen were undecided. It is interesting that there is neither strong agreement nor disagreement but four are undecided about the necessity of parochial schools for the welfare of the Catholic religion.

Thirteen of the Catholic high school graduates indicated they were active on rare occasions. Five of these were men and eight were women. It is interesting to note that the

people who indicated themselves as active in the parish on rare occasions seemed most influenced by financial considerations in the choice of a public education for their children. This is jedged by a comparison of responses to Statement]] (See Table 4-B) among the three groups.

Public High School Graduates

As prospects for the future seem to indicate that most Catholics will be graduates of public high schools, it will be interesting to note their attitudes towards the future of the parochial schools. Fifty-seven (57) of the respondents were graduates of public high schools; twenty-six (26) were graduates of parochial grade schools; and thirty-one (31) graduated from both public grade school and public high school. Public high schools graduates differ from the total population and especially differ from Catholic high graduates in their feeling about the necessity of parochial schools for the well being of the Catholic religion. They show much more of a willingness than the total population to "scrap" the high schools if necessary. This undoubtedly reflects their own experience of "survival" in the Catholic Faith in spite of attending a public high school.

It is interesting that there is no particularly strong opinion for one or the other when public high school graduates are asked if they feel a better education is given at the public high school than the local Catholic high school.

In comparison to the total population and Catholic high graduates, the public high school graduates were least inclined to favor state aid to non-public schools and most inclined to be undecided on the issue.

As one might expect, public high graduates were more inclined to send their children to public grade school and public high school, and they seem least likely to change their position if state aid were granted to non-public schools. However, if the public high graduate attended parochial grade school, he intended to send his children to parochial grade school and public high school. If he attended public grade school, he indicated he will send his children to public grade school and public high school.

ALUMNI OF ALL PUBLIC SCHOOLS

In four situations of the eighty-five (85) families who returned the questionnaire, neither husband nor wife ever graduated from a Catholic school. In two of these, husband and wife agreed the children would attend public grade school and public high school, and their answer would not be different if feceral or state aid were given to non-public schools. In one, both agreed on parochial grade school but were undecided on high school. In the fourth situation the husband indicated parochial grade school and public high school but the wife was undecided as to both.

Chapter Four - Summary, Discussion, and Profile

Our research questions were four --

1. Do young middle class white catholic parents of the Archdiocese of Chicago seriously believe that it is their moral obligation to send their children to parochial school?

Subject to the limitations of the study, we would conclude that there is evidence to indicate that young Catholic parents do not believe it is a moral obligation binding under sin to send their children to parochial school.

2. Are the majority of Catholic children coming of school age in the next six years likely to be enrolled in parochial schools?

Again subject to the limitations indicated above, our study shows that the majority of Catholic children coming of school age in the next six years are not likely to be enrolled in parochial schools.

3. Do young Catholic parents feel that the Catholic church should continue its system of parochial/ private schools?

Again subject to the limitations indicated above, our study shows that young Catholic parents are in favor of the Catholic church maintaining its system of parochial/private schools.

4. Do young Catholic parents believe that in fairness the federal or state government ought to give direct or indirect financial aid to parochial or private schools?

Again subject to the limitations indicated elsewhere, this study indicates that young catholic parents believe federal

or state government ought in fairness give direct or indirect financial aid to parochial or private schools.

Discussion

Of the potential one hundred families, eighty-five participated. Requirements for participation in the survey were simple; the family had one or more children, of either sex and of such age that the oldest child would be too young to be registered for first grade. The area schools usually require that a child reach his or her sixth birthday by December 1st following the beginning of the school year in September. All the families were registered members of St. Kieran Parish in Chicago Heights. As Catholic parishes register families rather than individuals, all would be considered Catholic families even though some would be considered "mixed marriages." In all cases the children of the families were baptized Catholics. We do not know the number of children these families have produced as such information is not pertinent to our investigation. Moreover, it is doubtful that most of the families have finished producing children.

We sought to identify the characteristics of the Catholic family of grade school age children of the years 1970 to 1976. One immediate limitation is that parents who already had children registered in school were not included in the survey, and if one feels such an exclusion is significant, it must be

taken into consideration in an analysis of the responses. It must also be taken into consideration that such a projection is really valid only as of the date of completion of the survey, that is, Fall, 1968.

Since that time a number of events have happened that might well have influenced the responses of the participants. Most significant was the announced closing of a number of Catholic/parochial and high schools, a greatly increased awareness on the part of Catholics of the financial plight of their schools, and a number of attempts in the State of Illinois to gain state financial support for private and parochial schools, elementary, and secondary. It is perhaps fortunate that the survey was completed when it was, as the timing was such that such singular external influences were minimal.

Eighty-nine (89) agreed, forty-five (45) disagreed, and thirty-five (35) were undecided with the Statement - Catholic parochal schools are essential to the welfare of the Catholic religion in the Unites states. This seems to support the feeling of many priests that American Catholics are more school-oriented than church or religion-oriented. There is little wonder at this as so many parishes are child or "kiddie" oriented rather than adult. Studies of Catholic parishes would reveal a great preoccupation with children -schools, gyms, scouts, etc. CAtholics seem to identify school with parish, and to evaluate the parish according to the relative success of its child-serving activities.

Few Catholics today have had the experience of belonging to an adult-oriented Catholic community. Many, too, attribute the strength of the Catholic Church today in the United States to the parochial education of the past. Others doubt this, but again, studies are not available.

Do young Catholic parents want their school phased out, or more specifically do they feel that it would be in the best interest of the Catholic Church to begin immediately to phase out all its parochial schools?

Twenty-five (25) would have them phased out while 107 want to keep parochial schools going - thirty seven were undecided.

The responses to this question seems to witness to a strong nostaglia for the parochial school. Identity of the parochial school with the Catholic parish is so strong that few can easily accept the separation. This is interesting in that later in the survey a majority indicated that their own children will probably be sent to public grade schools. Perhaps parents always want to maintain the option of choosing between a parochial or public school for their children. Perhaps they feel state aid will come someday. Perhaps they fail to realize the expense in money and personnel that goes to maintain the schools. Perhaps they wonder how priests and nuns would occupy themselves if there were no school. It would have been most interesting but impractical to ask reasons for the stated preferences.

Perhaps nostaglia again explains the massive disagreement with the suggestion that it would be in the best interests of

of the United States if all non-public schools were closed.

When it comes to a preference for specific grades there are many different opinions. The question comes down to at what age or grade level is the religious formation of the child most important, or most possible. High school teachers argue that the teen age years are most decisive, while the "head start people" argue about the early formation of the child. Religion teachers will argue in favor of the grade they teach, while Religion Administrators wonder at what age will children come most readily for instnuction.

From the view point of one administrator, it would be better to close the lower grades because the children could always be counted on to come to alternate religious instruction classes to prepare for the reception of the sacraments. He holds that it would be better to close the high schools because the expense per student is soohigh.

The parents in our survey indicated a preference for the grade schools over the high school and were fairly mixed when it came to a choice of higher or lower grades in the elementary level.

Almost half of the respondents said "undecided" when asked if the children who attended the parochial school received an inferior education, and seventy-eight (78) of 170 were undecided when asked about the relative value of Marian Catholic high school and Homewood Flossmoor high school.

Perhaps it is the general apathy and lack of concern or involvement that is evident in all areas of society, perhaps it is the failure of the parochial school and Catholic high school to do a good public relations job, perhaps it is because the respondents lacked personal contact with the schools involved, but it seems to me that the failure of the parochial school particularly to win an enthusiastic vote of confidence must find its reflection in the amount of church financial and moral support that can be expected in the future.

The ability of the Church to maintain a discipline in matters of positive law has undergone a serious weakening in recent times. The response to the statement regarding the possibility of sin in sending children to public schools seems to tell us that people are going to make up their own minds particularly when the arguments for a position are authoritive or disciplinary. This response amounts to a complete and total rejection of the discipline that most, if not all, of the respondents received. Only six agreed that it would be a serious sin for parents to send their children to a public school. One was undecided and 157 disagreed.

The responses to our query about state aid to private schools seems to represent a changed feeling as compared to a decade or a gnerration ago. The financial realities of private school eduction are quite differnt today, then they were then. The fear of Covernment supervision seems to have diminished in face of fiscal pressure. Perhaps many feel that there is so

much government regulation already that a little more could hardly be significant. Only twenty-four (24) are undecided, and forty (40) disagree while ninety-seven (97) are in favor of some type of aid to the private school.

ATTITUDINAL PROFILE OR THE MAJORITY OF CATHOLIC PARENTS OF PRE-SCHOOL CHILDREN

They feel that Catholic parochal schools are essential to the welfare of the Catholic religion in the United States, are opposed to the phasing out of Catholic schools, would choose the grade school over the high school if a choice were necessary.

They would prefer that the sixth, seventh, and eighth grade be eliminated rather than the first, second, and third grades if a choice were necessary in that area.

They are undecided when asked about the quality of education in the parochial school and are also undecided as to the relative merits of the local public high school and the local Catholic high school.

They strongly disagree with any suggestion that it might be a sin to send their children to public schools.

They agree that non-public schools are good for the country and agree that federal or state aid ought to be given to parochial or private schools for all subjects except religion.

When the time comes their children will probably be enrolled in public grade school and public high school unless substantial federal or state aid is granted to non-public school in which case the children will be enrolled in parochial grade school and may or may not attend Catholic high school.

Background information -- Please check all that pertains -- Please answer all questions as honestly as possible.

Husband:		*Wife:*	
	_____*Born Catholic*		_____*Born Catholic*
	_____*Convert Catholic*		_____*Convert Catholic*
	_____*Not a Catholic*		_____*Not a Catholic*
	_____*Lapsed Catholic*		_____*Lapsed Catholic*
	_____*Graduate Studies*		_____*Graduate Studies*
	_____*College Graduate of*		_____*College Graduate of*
	_____*Catholic College*		_____*Catholic College*
	_____*Other*		_____*Other*
	_____*High School Graduate (or equivalent)of*		_____*High School Graduate (or equivalent) of*
	_____*Catholic H.S.*		_____*Catholic H.S.*
	_____*Public H.S.*		_____*Public H.S.*
	_____*Grade School Graduate of*		_____*Grade School Graduate of*
	_____*Catholic Grade School*		_____*Catholic Grade School*
	_____*Public Grade School*		_____*Public Grade School*

Most if not all of grade and high school was in

Husband:	_____*Cook County, Illinois*	*Wife:*	_____*Cook County, Illinois*
	_____*Elsewhere*		_____*Elsewhere*

Number of years in St. Kieran's Parish

Husband:	_____*Less than three years*	*Wife:*	_____*Less than three years*
	_____*More than three years*		_____*More than three years*

How do you rate your present relationship to your parish?

Husband:	_____*Very or fairly active*	*Wife:*	_____*Very or fairly active*
	_____*Active on rare occasions*		_____*Active on rare occasions*
	_____*Not particularly active*		_____*Not particularly active*

1. Catholic Parochial Schools are essential to the Welfare of the Catholic Religion in the United States.

Husband:	*Wife:*
_____*Strongly Agree*	_____*Strongly Agree*
_____*Agree*	_____*Agree*
_____*Undecided*	_____*Undecided*
_____*Disagree*	_____*Disagree*
_____*Strongly Disagree*	_____*Strongly Disagree*

2. It would be in the best interests of the Catholic Church to begin immediately to phase out all its parochial schools.

Husband:	*Wife:*
_____*Strongly Agree*	_____*Strongly Agree*
_____*Agree*	_____*Agree*
_____*Undecided*	_____*Undecided*
_____*Disagree*	_____*Disagree*
_____*Strongly Disagree*	_____*Strongly Disagree*

3. If a choice must be made it would be better to keep and maintain the Catholic high schools and eliminate the grade schools.

Husband:	*Wife:*
_____*Strongly Agree*	_____*Strongly Agree*
_____*Agree*	_____*Agree*
_____*Undecided*	_____*Undecided*
_____*Disagree*	_____*Disagree*
_____*Strongly Disagree*	_____*Strongly Disagree*

4. If certain grades in the Catholic schools were to be eliminated it would be better to eliminate the lower grades (First, Second, and Third) and keep the Sixth, Seventh, and Eighth.

Husband:	*Wife:*
_____*Strongly Agree*	_____*Strongly Agree*
_____*Agree*	_____*Agree*
_____*Undecided*	_____*Undecided*
_____*Disagree*	_____*Disagree*
_____*Strongly Disagree*	_____*Strongly Disagree*

5. Children who attend St. Kieran Parochial Grade School receive an inferior education.

Husband:	*Wife:*
_____*Strongly Agree*	_____*Strongly Agree*
_____*Agree*	_____*Agree*
_____*Undecided*	_____*Undecided*
_____*Disagree*	_____*Disagree*
_____*Strongly Disagree*	_____*Strongly Disagree*

6. All Things considered, a boy or girl would get a better education at Homewood-Flossmoor High School than at Marian High School.

Husband:	*Wife:*
_____*Strongly Agree*	_____*Strongly Agree*
_____*Agree*	_____*Agree*
_____*Undecided*	_____*Undecided*
_____*Disagree*	_____*Disagree*
_____*Strongly Disagree*	_____*Strongly Disagree*

7. It would be a serious sin for parents to send their children to public schools.

Husband:	*Wife:*
_____*Strongly Agree*	_____*Strongly Agree*
_____*Agree*	_____*Agree*
_____*Undecided*	_____*Undecided*
_____*Disagree*	_____*Disagree*
_____*Strongly Disagree*	_____*STrongly Disagree*

8. It would be in the best interests of the United States if all non-public schools were eliminated.

Husband:	*Wife:*
_____*Strongly Agree*	_____*Strongly Agree*
_____*Agree*	_____*Agree*
_____*Undecided*	_____*Undecided*
_____*Disagree*	_____*Disagree*
_____*Strongly Disagree*	_____*Strongly Disagree*

9. The best and most fair solution is for either the Federal or State Government to give financial aid to parochial and private schools (either direct or indirect) for all subjects except religion.

Husband:		*Wife:*	
_____	*Strongly Agree*	_____	*Strongly Agree*
_____	*Agree*	_____	*Agree*
_____	*Undecided*	_____	*Undecided*
_____	*Disagree*	_____	*Disagree*
_____	*Strongly Disagree*	_____	*Strongly Disagree*

10. As I see things now, when the time comes, my children will probably be enrolled in

Husband:		*Wife:*	
_____	*Public Grade School*	_____	*Public Grade School*
_____	*Parochial Grade School*	_____	*Parochial Grade School*
_____	*Undecided*	_____	*Undecided*
	and		*and*
_____	*Public High School*	_____	*Public High School*
_____	*Catholic High School*	_____	*Catholic High School*
_____	*Undecided*	_____	*Undecided*

11. IF, the Federal or State Governments were to grant substantial aid to non-public schools, so as to render tuition and other expenses almost negligible, my response to question number 10 would be

Husband:		*Wife:*	
_____	*Definitely different*	_____	*Definitely different*
_____	*Probably different*	_____	*Probably different*
_____	*Undecided*	_____	*Undecided*
_____	*Probably the same*	_____	*Probably the same*
_____	*Definitely the same*	_____	*Definitely the same*

Please answer all questions as honestly as possible. Return either by mail or by dropping in the collection basket on Sunday. Please return on or before next Sunday and please use the enclosed envelope.

Thank you most sincerely for your cooperation. Please do not put your name on the survey sheet, but please do use the coded envelope in returning the survey so we can tell which surveys have not yet been returned and proper follow up may be made.